

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
AMEMBASSY QUITO
AMEMBASSY SAN OSE
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

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E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PINS, NU
SUBJECT: CHAMORRO ASSASSINATION CONFESSION

SUMMARY: THE ORGANIZER OF THE CHAMORRO ASSASSINATION HAS GIVEN FURTHER TESTIMONY WHICH REVERSES EARLIER STATEMENTS AND NAMES ADDITIONAL PROMINENT FIGURES AS INVOLVED OR AWARE OF HIS PLANS. IF HE IS BELIEVED, THERE ARE SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS FOR THOSE INVOLVED REGARDLESS OF HOW TRIAL PROCEEDINGS DEVELOP. BUT EVEN IF HIS CHARGES CAN BE SUBSTANTIATED, THERE WILL STILL REMAIN SUSPICIONS AS TO WHETHER THERE IS STILL SOMEONE BEING PROTECTED. END SUMMARY

1. THE LEADER OF THE CHAMORRO ASSASSINATION TEAM, SILVIO PENA, HAS BROKEN WITH HIS FABRICATED TESTIMONY. ON JANUARY 22, HE RESCINDED HIS PREVIOUS DENIAL OF INVOLVEMENT IN THE FACE OF OVERWHELMING EVIDENCE AGAINST HIM AND NAMED PERSONS ADDITIONAL TO PREVIOUSLY IDENTIFIED US CITIZEN DR. PEDRO RAMOS OF PLASMAFERISIS, WHO HE SAID RAMOS CLAIMED HAD PAID (200,000 CORDOBAS EACH) FOR THE ASSASSINATION. THE OTHERS NAMED BY RAMOS TO PENA ARE DR. CONRELIO HUECK, STILL
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PRESIDENT OF THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES DESPITE HIS FALL FROM GRACE AND POWER FOLLOWING SOMOZA'S RECOVERY FROM HIS HEART ATTACK AND DR. FAUSTO ZELAYA, WHO WAS REPLACED IN DECEMBER AS PRESIDENT OF THE NICARAGUAN HOUSING BANK WHERE HE HAD A STRONG REPUTATION FOR CORRUPTION.

2. OTHER PEOPLE PENA SAID HE UNDERSTOOD FROM RAMOS HAD BEEN AP-

PROACHED BUT WHO DID NOT SUPPORT THE ASSASSINATION PLAN WERE LIC. JUAN JOSE MARTINEZ WHO WAS REPLACED IN DECEMBER AS ECONOMIC MINISTER, DR. CARLOS DUBON, RECENTLY APPOINTED DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE TAX OFFICE AND DR. FERNANDO AGUERO ROCHA, FORMER CONSERVATIVE PARTY PRESIDENT AND STILL CLAIMANT TO THAT POSITION AS LEADER OF A CONSERVATIVE PARTY FACTION.

3. THIS INFORMATION FOLLOWS REVELATION ON JANUARY 22 THAT AN IN-LAW OF PENA WHO WORKED FOR SOMOZA-FAMILY NEWSPAPER NOVEDADES WAS TOLD BY PENA TWICE BEFORE THE ASSASSINATION THAT IT WAS BEING PLANNED. ACCORDING TO THE JOURNALIST'S TESTIMONY, PENA WAS DREAMING UP SHADY DEALS AND FRAUDS SO REGULARLY THAT NO ONE WHO KNEW HIM, TOOK HIM SERIOUSLY. THE SECOND DEVELOPMENT IN TESTIMONY ON JANUARY 22 IS BY THE SECRETARY OF DR. PEDRO RAMOS WHO SAID PENA CAME TO SEE RAMOS AT PLASMAFERISES IN DECEMBER AND RECEIVED A LARGE SUM OF MONEY WHICH COULD ONLY HAVE BEEN AUTHORIZED BY RAMOS WHO AT THE TIME WAS IN MIAMI.

4. THE PREVIOUS DAY HAROLD CEDENO TESTIFIED PENA HAD RECRUITED HIM SAYING THAT HE WORKED FOR A POWERFUL U.S. ORGANIZATION WHICH WOULD PROTECT THEM FROM ANY HARM IF THEY GOT INTO TROUBLE. PENA REPORTEDLY WENT ON TO SAY THE ORGANIZATION WAS THE CIA. PEDRO JOAQUIN CHAMORRO'S OPPOSITION NEWSPAPER, LA PRENSA, COMMENTED THAT THIS ALLEGATION WAS TOO RIDICULOUS TO BE BELIEVED.

5. THE IMAGE OF PENA WHICH HAS EMERGED IS OF AN ENTIRELY UNSCRUPULOUS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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LOUS, CON-MAN AND GANGSTER WHO IS UNSTABLE EMOTIONALLY. IT BECOMES ENTIRELY PROBABLE THAT ON HIS OWN OR AFTER AN INITIAL SUGGESTION BY DR. RAMOS, WHO HE IDENTIFIED AS HIS FIRST EMPLOYER IN THE ASSASSINATION, HE SET ABOUT SELLING THE IDEA TO AS MANY PERSONS AS HE COULD THINK OF WHO WERE WEALTHY AND MIGHT HAVE A GRIEVANCE AGAINST CHAMORRO.

THE PERSONS HE NAMED ALL WOULD HAVE HAD A GRIEVANCE. IF PENA IS NOW BELIEVED, AND IN LIGHT OF EVIDENCE OF AN UNUSUAL PAYMENT BY RAMOS IT IS BECOMING MORE CREDIBLE, THERE WILL BE SERIOUS LEGAL REPERCUSSIONS IN TERMS OF THE CONGRESSIONAL IMMUNITY OF DR. HUECK, AS WELL AS RAMOS AND ZELAYA BEING OUTSIDE OF NICARAGUA. THERE ARE ALSO IMPLICATIONS OF AT LEAST COMPLICITY BY NEGLIGENCE ON THE PART OF PERSONS WHO MIGHT HAVE BEEN AWARE OF PENA'S PLANS AND FAILED TO TAKE ANY ACTION. DUBON IS IN A KEY GOVERNMENTAL POSITION AND AGUERO'S POLITICAL

FUTURE, AS TARNISHED AS IT ALREADY IS, COULD BE ENDED IF PEOPLE BELIEVED HE HAD ADVANCE KNOWLEDGE OF THE ASSASSINATION. AGUERO IMMEDIATELY DENIED THAT HE HAD EVER KNOWN PENA AND BLAMED THE ASSASSINATION AND RESULTANT TESTIMONY ON THE SOMOZA REGIME.

6. THE QUESTION REMAINS WHETHER IN LIGHT OF PENA'S PAST LIES HE WILL NOW BE BELIEVED. IT SEEMS UNLIKELY UNLESS HE GIVES SIGNIFICANTLY MORE

DETAILS WHICH CAN BE CORROBORATED, EVEN THEN THE SUSPICION IS LIKE-
LY TO TO EXIST THAT THERE REMAIN FURTHER EVEN MORE IMPORTANT
PERSONS WHOSE NAMES HE IS WITHHOLDING FOR HIS OWN SAFETY AND IN THE
BELIEF HE WILL RECEIVE EASIER TREATMENT.
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